

oCOO to all principals, ES, Supts, BCOs, etc., w/backpack to families - 2/26/2020

From: ChiefOperatingOfficer <ChiefOperatingOfficer@schools.nyc.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, February 26, 2020 2:30 PM

Subject: RE: Coronavirus Update 02/26/2020

Dear Principals,

This week, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention discussed possible options for what could happen if there is local person-to-person transmission of the novel coronavirus in the United States, including recommendations for school systems to consider.

At this time, it is important to listen to facts and not respond to fear. Currently, there are no confirmed cases of novel coronavirus in New York City and the risk to New Yorkers remains low.

However, transmission of the virus in other countries has raised our level of concern, and we are preparing for the possibility of person-to-person transmission in New York City. The measures that are put in place should local person-to-person transmissions begin will depend on the number of individuals affected and the general severity of illness we experience in our city. Our public health experts are vigilantly preparing for a spectrum of possible scenarios, and we are in close contact with them regarding how that may impact our school communities. There are no plans to close schools at this time.

This is an extreme measure that can be disruptive to day to day life, and the decision to implement will be at the direction of public health experts.

All students and staff should continue to practice general flu prevention measures including:

- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or sleeve
- Wash your hands regularly
- Avoid touching your face
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Get your flu shot – it's never too late
- Stay home if you're feeling sick. Call your doctor and let them know your symptoms, travel history, and if you've had contact with people who are sick.

Please backpack the attached letter home to families, as well as these [Coronavirus FAQs](#) for helpful information regarding common questions about the coronavirus, if possible today or latest tomorrow.

If you are able to share the letter and FAQs electronically with your school community, we encourage you to do so. It is up to all of us to ensure school communities are informed of the facts in order to stay aware of the latest updates, and also to help guard against stigma and fear associated with the virus.

Translated versions of the letter will be made available shortly on the [DOE's website](#).

For more information and regular updates, visit the [Health Department's website](#). For questions, contact your school nurse or BCO [health director](#).

Office of the Chief Operating Officer

BCC includes:

All Superintendents Offices

All PLFs

All Field Support Liaisons

All BFSC

All Principals (DIIT)

All Directors ECE



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE
Oxiris Barbot, MD
Commissioner

February 26, 2020

Dear Families,

This week, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention discussed possible options for what could happen if there is local person-to-person transmission of the novel coronavirus in the United States, including recommendations for school systems to consider.

At this time, it is important to listen to facts and not respond to fear. Currently there are no confirmed cases of novel coronavirus in New York City and the risk to New Yorkers remains low.

However, transmission of the virus in other countries has raised our level of concern, and we are preparing for the possibility of person-to-person transmission in New York City. The measures that are put in place should local person-to-person transmissions begin will depend on the number of individuals affected and the general severity of illness we experience in our city. The NYC Health Department is vigilantly preparing for all possible scenarios, and we will continue to monitor and communicate about any possible impact to our school communities.

There are no plans to close schools at this time. This is an extreme measure that can be disruptive to day-to-day life, and the decision to implement will be at the direction of public health experts.

All New Yorkers should continue to practice general flu prevention measures including:

- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or sleeve
- Wash your hands regularly
- Avoid touching your face
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Get your flu shot – it's never too late
- Stay home if you're feeling sick. Call your doctor and let them know your symptoms and travel history.

Please read the [Frequently Asked Questions sheet](#) attached to this letter for more information, or visit nyc.gov/health at any time for important updates.

We will continue to clearly communicate with our school communities about our ongoing efforts regarding the coronavirus.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Oxiris Barbot MD".

Oxiris Barbot, MD
Commissioner
New York City Department of
Health and Mental Hygiene